NOTE.

The Quest for Folk Songs in Hampshire.

Dr. G. B. Gardiner, a skilled linguist and musician from Edinburgh, has been for several months actively engaged in collecting, and in many cases rescuing from oblivion, folk songs in Hampshire. It has been my privilege to meet him more than once, to hear his interesting account of his searches, and to listen to his admirable rendering of some of his choice recoveries. I asked him to honour the members of the Hampshire Field Club by writing an article for their Proceedings on his work and its results; but he was forced to reply: "I am so overwhelmed with songs—tunes, texts, and notes—that my hands will be full for months." However he referred me to a letter which he wrote to the *Hampshire Chronicle* of September 1st, 1906, and by the courtesy of the proprietors of that excellent paper, I am permitted to reproduce the letter in full.

F.J.C.H.

When I first had the pleasure of meeting you last summer, I had just begun the work of collecting folk songs in Hampshire. You now ask me to report progress, and I gladly comply with your request, if it were only to have the opportunity of publicly acknowledging your own courtesy, the kindness of my numerous singers, and the willing help of many good people in the county.

Throughout my life I have been a lover of folk-songs, in the first instance, of course, of the songs of Scotland. In the course of many visits to the Continent I gradually extended my range, and three years ago I entered on the systematic study of the folk-songs of Europe, learning typical examples of ancient French, German, Russian, Swedish, Finnish, Hungarian, and even Bohemian and Slovenian songs. I had just studied with intense interest the volume of marvellous songs edited for the Manx Society by Mr. Gill, when it occurred to me to inquire about the songs of England, the real old traditional songs, with no composer's name, the songs handed down by the cottagers of the country from father to son for generations. I wondered whether Englishmen had any songs of the same character as the old Scotch songs—songs which they could endearingly call *our* songs. In the current English song-books there was, indeed to be found a sprinkling of the songs of the soil, the autochthonous songs 'of our land, such as "Barbara Allen," "The Oak and the Ash," and a very few others, but not the mass of purely traditional music that is contained in the great Scottish, Irish, Welsh, Hungarian, or Swedish collections. Surely, I thought, it could not be that our country was the only country in Europe that was destitute of spontaneous melody.

It was at this stage that I joined the Folk Song Society and obtained six numbers of its Journal. I also provided myself with "Sussex Songs," "English County Songs," "Songs of the West," "A Garland of Country Song," "Folk Songs from Somerset," "English Folk Songs," and "Traditional Tunes," the collections in which are contained the songs still sung in country places and recently rescued from oblivion. In these volumes I at last found what I wanted—a body of nameless, hereditary, English songs of the people corresponding to the songs published in the Swedish collection of Geijer and Afzelius, the Manx collection, the Balmoral collection of Scotch songs, and the Hungarian collection of Matrai Gabriel. In the English song-books I have named are to be found dozens and scores of songs of surpassing beauty, the existence of which was only then revealed to me, and is, I fear, practically unknown to the mass of educated Englishmen. Indeed, I have never met a professional musician who could name to me more than five or six English songs of the same type as the songs of Burns. Yet we possess collections that in quantity and quality will compare favourably with those of any Continental country. I would even venture to assert that from the songs of the English peasantry a hundred could be selected equal to the hundred best songs of Europe contained in the "International Folk Song Album" of Dr. Reimann. Dr. Vaughan Williams says that the collector has "the ever-present chance of picking up some rare old ballad or an exquisitely beautiful melody worthy, within its smaller compass, of a place beside the finest compositions of the greatest composers."

What could excel in beauty or quaintness "Cicely Sweet," "Down by a Riverside," "The Hostess' Daughter," "The Marigold," "Strawberry Fair," "Sweet Nightingale," "The Seeds of Love," "The Sweet Priméroses," "The Drowned Lover," "I'm Seventeen Come Sunday?" The good people of Twyford sing "The Sweet Priméroses" in an exquisitely beautiful form, If any one wants a lovely song, let him go to Twyford and learn "The Priméroses," instead of buying the treacly drawing-room ballads that are so unblushingly thrust upon us from day to day. These constitute the tinned meat department of musical literature.

The name of Twyford reminds me that that village was my first happy hunting-ground in Hampshire. I say happy, because I had there a hearty welcome. In Twyford I collected eleven songs and two carols, one of which appeared in the seventh Journal of the Society. Hursley yielded ten songs, among them "Old Swansea Town," a bold sea-song, what some country people call "a rattler," and "Robin Hood and the Bold Tanner," the text, of which, according to Mr. Cecil Sharp, has come down by word of mouth for 300 years. An excellent singer at Itchen Abbas gave me, among eighteen songs, "Lord Paget," a song of the Peninsular War, and a very fine ancient melody wedded to modern words about Avington Pond. The most beautiful of the sixty songs I collected last summer was a version of "The Seeds of Love," obtained from a fine tenor at Cheriton. Practically the same tune is reprinted from Chappell at page 40 of John Hullah's "Songbook," but the Hampshire muse has added some touches which greatly enhance its beauty.

"The Seeds of Love" leads me to a few remarks on the distribution of songs. Curiously I found this melody again in the second volume of "Songs of the North," where it is described as an ancient Northern air. Who can determine its birthplace? "I'm Seventeen come Sunday," a favourite throughout out the South of England, resembles the Manx song, "She answered me quite Modestly," and this in turn is allied to "St. Patrick was a Gentleman," and to a MS Highland tune in the library of Mr. T. A. Mackay, Edinburgh. The air of "Green Bushes," familiar to most country singers, is almost identical with "The Lament of the Duchess of Gloucester" in the Manx collection. Last summer I received from a correspondent at Helston, in Cornwall, a plaintive song, "Poor Old Maidens." You can imagine my disappointment when I

found this song note for note in Christie's "Traditional airs of Aberdeen, Banff, and Moray." Another song printed by Christie, and also found in the South, is "Claudy Banks." "Ground for the Floor," in "English County Songs," was noted in Cambridgeshire, but I have heard it at Dummer, and at Padstow, in Cornwall. Examples could be multiplied indefinitely.

Bringing with me thirty songs collected near Bath I resumed my labours here in the middle of March, and have now for the year a budget of 316 songs. Of songs noted in Hampshire alone I have altogether about 350. This season I have worked in succession Old Alresford, Bishop's Sutton, Micheldever, Whitchurch, Lyndhurst, and the workhouses at Lyndhurst Road, Romsey, Southampton, Fareham, Winchester, Whitchurch, and I am now busy at the workhouse at Basingstoke. A singer well-known in the Forest for his remarkable memory gave me over 30 songs, and his brother 16. From one singer at Fareham I obtained 21 songs, from one at Micheldever 15, and from another 12. An old gentleman at Dummer, the head of a very musical family, furnished ten fine carols and four songs, one of remarkable beauty, "The Drowned Lover." Of the workhouses Southampton yielded 45 songs, Fareham 25, Winchester 20, and Basingstoke, which has turned 50, promises far to surpass the rest. The reason why I am exploring the workhouses is this. My labour has been seriously interrupted by the haymaking and the harvest. One day I walked for miles near Lyndhurst and Minstead without making any headway. Everybody was working till sunset, and came home rather in a sleeping than a singing mood. I politely said to some of the people, "This is really too bad. My song-harvest is at a standstill. To oblige me could you not put off that haymaking for a year?" They would not consent.

People sometimes ask me how I discover my singers. Well I simply ask anybody. If I am driving to Micheldever or Lyndhurst, I tell the driver what I am doing, and ask him to name anyone who can sing an old-world song. If he cannot tell, I go to the blacksmith or the innkeeper, who know the neighbourhood as well as most men, and am invariably received with the utmost civility. When I make my first visit I explain what I am doing and the kind of song I want, and when people really understand my object I find them not only willing but eager to help me. Besides, a singer is always a jolly good fellow. Sometimes one is misunderstood. I have been asked, "Are you travelling for the Gramaphone Company?" "Do you represent Novello and Co.?" And I have even been taken for a detective. Once I called on an old lady who was prepared for my visit. Unfortunately, someone else answered the door, and when I spoke of old songs the answer was, "We don't want old songs." "We have no money to give for old songs." "We really don't require any to-day."

"But what does this craze mean?" someone may say. It means this. The beautiful old Scotch songs which are sung throughout the English-speaking world were all collected, words and music, more than a century ago. Walter Scott noted the Border Ballads about the same time. In 1858 the Norwegian Government commissioned Dr. Sophus Bugge, now famous throughout the world as a philologist, to explore the valleys of Norway for ancient songs and legends, and, if I am not misinformed, the rustic songs of Germany are now being collected at the expense of the Emperor. In like manner the Folk Song Society is endeavouring, at the eleventh hour, to record and preserve for the nation what still remains of the musical heritage of England. A writer in the *Morning Post* says that this is a work of supererogation. The quantity and the quality of the material already collected by the Society is proof that the writer speaks without knowledge. One of my Basingstoke singers, a fine old gentleman of 84, would learn his first songs as far back as 1830, in the days of the stage coach, when Basingstoke was but a sleepy and sequestered village. Is it not obvious that from such a man we may hear songs that have come down many generations? In point of fact we do. I have already referred to my Hursley ballad, a complete version of which is to be seen in Ritson's

"Robin Hood Ballads" (1823). A Micheldever singer gave me a song about Captain Ward, a noted pirate of the reign of James I. His text is a fragment of No. 287 of Child's great book of British ballads. I have another fragment, "The Blackbird," which is pronounced to be part of an old ballad by that eminent authority, Mr. Frank Kidson, of Leeds. In Lyndhurst I found a text of the well known "Golden Vanity" with a fresh and excellent tune (Child, No. 286), and I had the offer of "Henry Martyn" (No. 250). "With my ring ding, ding a ding a ding," the refrain of "The Cobbler," from Winchester Workhouse, has to me quite ancient sound. I have also recently collected a fresh tune to "Lord Thomas and Fair Eleanor" (see "English County Songs") and a brief version of "Georgie." The texts are very often doggerel or corrupt and fragmentary, and sometimes they are unfit for publication. But a skilled hand can put them into a presentable and even an elegant shape, as may be seen in "Songs of the West" and "Folk Songs from Somerset." In regard to the music, when I submitted my budget to a young composer he selected 24 of the tunes as possessing superlative merit from his point of view, and thought there were at least 50 that would be extremely interesting and valuable to singers.

The subjects of the songs are of almost infinite variety. There is, for example, the song beginning "'Tis of a merchant's daughter," or "'Tis of a gallant sailor," describing some romance or adventure in a dozen verses. Many a romantic song opens with "As I was a-walking" or "As I rode out." Susan, Nancy, and other fair ladies have inspired many a noble lay. What wonder? Then there is the haymaking and the sheepshearing song with a health to the master and mistress. There is a song about almost every sort of tradesman in the High Street of Winchester, "The brisk young butcher," "The tailor," "The cobbler," "The chimney-sweep," and about others not represented there, "The collier's son," "The miners." Even the professions do not escape. I lately unearthed "The lawyer" and "The doctor." One of my most recent captures is "The hangman" or "The prickly bush." In sea-songs, as might be expected, Hampshire abounds. Examples are, "Paul Jones," "The bold Princess Royal," "The Isle of France," "The Banks of Newfoundland," "The loss of the Ramillies," "The Golden Vanity," "From sweet Dundee," "Nelson," "Old Swansea Town," "Captain Ward," "As I was a-cruising all on the Spanish shore."

Before concluding I wish to ask a particular favour of your readers. I should be extremely obliged if any one would send me a complete text of :—

"I am a cobbler brave, just got my freedom.
Oh, I've fixed my mind all on a bonny woman,
With my ring ding, ding a ding a ding
With my cuckoo and my goo,
With my ring ding, ding a ding a ding,
But still she is my dearie."

and of "The Blackbird" beginning :—

"If I was a blackbird I'd whistle and sing,
And I'd follow the ship that my love was in."

My labours would also be greatly lightened, if some of your readers would kindly furnish me with the names and addresses of singers who could give me old world songs in considerable numbers. Such singers, both men and women, exist but the difficulty is to find them.

My best thanks are due to my singers and other kind friends in the places I have named, and to the Boards of Guardians and the masters of the workhouses in various parts of the county. I also acknowledge my great obligation to Mr. Balfour Gardiner, the composer, Mr. H. E. D. Hammond, of the Folk Song Society, Mr. Gamblin, of Winchester, Mr. J. F. Guyer, of Southampton, and Mr. Duncan Hume, of Bournemouth, for the extraordinary care and patience with which they noted the tunes.

NOTES ON RECENT PUBLICATIONS CONCERNING HAMPSHIRE.

By Owen Gilbert.

Anon. Pictures in colour of the Isle of Wight, comprising 50 plates executed in colour photography, with brief descriptive notes, sm. 4to., 2/6 net (Jarrold).

Cartrie, Memoirs of the Count de. A record of the extraordinary events in the life of a French Royalist during the War in La Vendée, and of his flight to Southampton, with an introduction by Frederic Masson; portrait and illusts., 8vo., 16/- net (John Lane).

As is now known to many Southampton residents who are interested in its past history, the writer of these memoirs followed the humble occupation of gardener at Bitterne Grove, during his exile. His diary is of considerable mportance in that it throws new light on the stirring times in which he lived.

Hearnshaw, Prof. F. J. C., M.A., LL.M. The Records of Southampton, a brief account of some of the Borough Documents, with photographic facsimile of the famous "Oak Book," 8vo., (24 pp.), 1/- net (Southampton).

To the large number of people who are keenly interested in the older history of the town, and especially to those who are eagerly awaiting the further publications of the Southampton Record Society, the above brochure will serve as an appreciable introduction to a closer study, and cannot fail to stimulate interest generally.

Liveing, Rev. H. G. D., M.A. Records of Romsey Abbey, an account of the Benedictine House of Nuns, with notes on the Parish Church and Town (A.D. 907—1558) (Winchester: Warren & Son), 1906. [See review below.]

May, Lieut.-Col. John., V.D., of Basingstoke. Cricket in North Hants—records and reminiscences, with a large number of portraits, photographs of groups, &c., large 8vo., buckram, 7/6 net (Basingstoke: Warren & Son), 1906.

A most worthy contribution to the history of this essentially Hampshire game. Hambledonian cricket has its historians, but the rest of the County has hitherto been neglected.

Rayner, J. F., Member of the British Mycological Society. A list of the Fungi of the New Forest, illustrated (25 pp.), 8vo., 1/- net (Southampton).

This carefully compiled brochure enumerates some 570 species found within he 92,000 acres of the New Forest, and forms a useful contribution to the botanical literature of the county. A supplementary list—which is to include many new species—will be issued as soon as possible.

REVIEWS.

Origin of the Anglo-Saxon Race,[1] by the late T. W. Shore; Edited by his sons, T. W. and L. E. Shore. London. Eliot Stock. 9/- net.

The appearance of this posthumous work of the late Mr. T. W. Shore has aroused considerable interest in the learned world. Historians, ethnologists, antiquarians, and others are all curious to see what new light Mr. Shore, for long known as a patient and diligent student of the early English period, has been able to throw upon one of the most obscure problems awaiting solution at the hands of modern research. To Hampshire readers the volume has an additional interest, not only because of its specially full and admirable summary of all the local evidence bearing upon the main theme, but also because of the close and intimate connection which, for a quarter of a century, Mr. Shore had with the county. Throughout the long period during which he was Principal of the Hartley Institute (now University College), Southampton, he did a great work on behalf of Hampshire archæology, of which work the Hampshire Field Club remains the enduring memorial.

The volume before us is at once the most important, the most original, and the most mature of all Mr. Shore's writings. His well-known "History of Hampshire" naturally covers more familiar ground, and is more popular in its purpose. His numerous geological and archæological papers (a memorial collection of which is being prepared for the press by the Field Club), valuable as they are, of course lack that unity of design which is conspicuous in this work. It is a matter for deep

[1] This review is reprinted from the *Hampshire Chronicle* of August 11, 1906, by kind permission of the proprietors.

regret that Mr. Shore did not live to see his *magnum opus* through the press; but the task of editing the manuscript has been done with such care and such conspicuous ability by Drs. T. W. and L. E. Shore that it is difficult to see that the author himself could greatly have improved upon their achievement. The excellent indexes added by Miss Blanche Shore considerably enhance the value of the book to scholars.

The problem with which Mr. Shore deals is the ethnological sources of that great people, commonly called Anglo-Saxon, which now dominates Great Britain and the United States, and has its settlements in all parts of the world. He is alive to both the difficulty and the importance of his theme; thus (p. 247) he says: "This Anglo-Saxon age is the darkest period of our history, and yet it was this period that saw the beginning of the English race, and as such it must always be a time of much interest to the people of the Anglo-Saxon stock." He is well aware that all the common sources of information have long been exhausted, and that little is to be gained by merely going again over the scanty and much-studied records of ancient chroniclers. But he is not limited to these. With wide learning and high ingenuity he draws upon less direct sources of knowledge, and is thus able to bring to bear much novel and weighty evidence. The result is a most impressive demonstration of the essential unity of science, that is, of the fact that knowledge is one and indivisible. History by itself is not knowledge: it is but one aspect of knowledge, and its utmost revelations can be only partial manifestations of the complete reality.

Mr. Shore uses history in so far as it serves his purpose; he examines the narratives of Bede and Nennius, he draws upon the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle and Asser, he gathers evidence from the authoritative Domesday Survey.

It should be noted, however, that, owing no doubt to the fact that Mr. Shore left his work incomplete, some sources of historical information have not been used. The sixth-century writer, Gildas, has been overlooked. Such authoritative modern books as Zimmer's "Nennius Vindicatus," Stevenson's "Asser," Seebohm's "Tribal System in Wales," Vinogradoff's "Growth of the Manor," have apparently not been consulted.

Secondly, he turns to philology and makes a careful study of place-names (many of which are highly significant) and dialects. Thirdly, he avails himself of the services of anthropology, and examines the evidence presented on the one hand by human remains which have been disinterred, on the other by existing peoples. Fourthly, archæology is laid under contribution, and such information is gathered as is given either by tangible relics of the past, or by survivals of old habits and customs. Finally, ancient laws, obscure forms of Government, folklore, mythology—all are brought in, and all are made to render their quota of help towards the answering of the great racial enigma. Truly, Mr. Shore might have said, in the well-known words of Terence, "*Homo sum: humani nihil a me alienum puto.*

Of course there is danger in the gathering of information from sources so widely scattered and so diverse. No one can profess to be a specialist, or first-hand authority, on half-a-dozen aspects of knowledge, and Mr. Shore would have been the first to admit his indebtedness to many earlier scholars, and the first to allow that his conclusions cannot be regarded as fully established till they have been examined on every side by experts.

The method which he has adopted has been the so-called "comparative method." He has brought together relics of the past and survivals in the present, place names in England and tribal designations of Germany and Scandinavia, evidence collected from prehistoric burial-mounds, and that derived from modern anthropometrical laboratories, and he has endeavoured to co-ordinate, harmonise, and interpret the whole in the light of one leading idea. That leading idea is well expressed by himself (p. 17) thus: "Like a stream which can be followed up to many sources, the Anglo-Saxon race can be traced to many tribal origins," and, he adds, the purpose of this book is "to show that in various parts of England people of diverse tribes became settled near to each other, in some districts one tribe preponderating, and in some another, a preponderance which has produced ethnological differences that have survived to the present day, and has left differences in dialects that bear witness to diversities in their origin." So, again, at the end of the book (p. 391) he summarises his general

results in the following words: "One of the conclusions to which the evidence that has been brought forward leads us is that the old English or Anglo-Saxon race was formed on English soil out of many tribal elements, and that the settlers who came here were known among themselves by tribal names, many of which still survive in those of some of the oldest settlements, where they lived under customary, family, and kindred law. Under the general names of Jutes, Angles, Saxons, Danes, and Northmen, came numerous allies."

The detailed evidence on which Mr. Shore bases this conclusion is set forth and expounded in three groups of chapters. The first group deals with the ancient peoples—Saxons, Angles, Jutes, Goths, Northmen, Frisians, Rugians, Wends, Danes—and their early continental homes, and shows on the one hand that each of these so-called tribes consisted of many and various elements, and on the other, that the tribal names (*e.g.*, Jutes and Goths) were by no means mutually exclusive, but were sometimes more nearly synonymous. The second group treats of customs of inheritance, family settlements, and early organisation, and proves that *e.g.*, such institutions as primogeniture, gavelkind, junior right were persistently characteristic of certain tribes, so that their survival affords valuable evidence concerning primitive settlements. The third group is geographical: it takes in order the regions of England occupied by the "Anglo-Saxons," and applies to each the principles of investigation explained in the earlier portions of the book.

It may be of interest to Hampshire readers to note the results of this inquiry in the case of their own county. The invaders who in the fifth and sixth centuries occupied the central portion of the old Romano-British province of Britannia Prima were known as "Gewissas." The term was used by their first historian, the Northumbrian Bede (d. 736); it was still current in the twelfth century, for Ordericus Vitalis calls the country round Winchester "the land of the Gewissas." The word seems to have been of Gothic origin, and to have connoted a band of sworn allies or confederates. The confederates belonged to many distinct though closely related clans, mainly of Saxon or Frisian descent. When they came they appear

to have found Jutish settlers already established in the Isle of Wight, the Meon Valley, and the New Forest. Later on they themselves were forced to admit incursions and occupations of Danish and Wendish immigrants. Mr. Shore tries to find traces of these four groups of Teutonic or Slavonic colonists, and to localise their settlements. Of the Saxons and Frisians (the Gewissas) he finds evidence in the prevailing blonde complexion of the inhabitants of the county, and in many place-names (*e.g.*, Emsworth and the river Ems, which he compares with Emden and the river Ems in Eastern Friesland); of the Jutes he sees traces in the parage or parcenary tenure which prevailed in the Isle of Wight and the New Forest, in the name "Ytene" (from Ytena, genitive plural of Yte, meaning Jutes), once used for the Forest region, and in such relics as the Runic inscription discovered in the Island and the weapons and trinkets unearthed in the Droxford burial-ground; of the Danes or Norseman he is reminded by the prevalence of allodial tenure along the western border of the county, by the occurrence of Scandinavian place-names (*e.g.*, Thruxton and Wallop), and by the fact that at the time of the Domesday Survey the tenants of Ringwood and Winston on the mainland and of Arreton on the Island paid their dues in terms of Danish money; of the hitherto unsuspected presence of Wendish, Vandal, or Rugian settlers he is convinced by the existence of a dark complexioned people in various parts of the county, mainly the south, by the survival of "borough English" in nine Hampshire manors, and by the name Rowner (A.S., Ruwanoringa) which he connects with the word Rugian. In the case of Dorsetshire, but not in the case of Hampshire, he is able to support his novel and curious theory of a considerable Slavonic settlement in England by the evidence of skulls.

The chapter on London is also one of peculiar interest. Mr. Shore maintains the view that it was first captured and occupied by the Jutes of Kent, in opposition to the generally received opinion that the East Saxons secured the great prize in or about A.D. 568. He lays stress upon (1) The late rise and early impotence of the Kingdom of Essex; (2) the similarity of the freemen of London to the franklins of Kent;

(3) the prevalence of gavelkind in London; (4) the exemption of both Kentish men and Londoners from process of distress for debts; (5) similar rights in regard to testamentary disposition, age of inheritance, and widow's dower. A strong case is made out, but, if space permitted, it would be possible to traverse several of the arguments. To give only one example. With regard to the Kentish custom of gavelkind, which involved partible inheritance among all the sons of a deceased father, Mr. Shore sees the recognition of this custom in the charter of William the Conqueror: "And I will that every child be his father's heir after his father's day." He comments thus: "As every child was to be *his* father's heir—not his or her father's—it is clear that the custom referred to was the old Kentish custom of partible inheritance among sons." Now if Mr. Shore had read this charter in its Anglo-Saxon original and not in a modern English translation he would never have used this argument. The Anglo-Saxon runs: "And ic wylle thœt aelc cyld beo his faeder yrfnume." The word "cyld" (child) is neuter; "faeder" (father's) is of course masculine, and "his" agrees in gender, number, and case with "faeder" without any respect whatever to "cyld." Thus it could mean "her father" just as easily as "his father," and no more can be argued from it than if it had been in Latin, "sui patris," or in modern French, "de son pere." It weakens rather than strengthens Mr. Shore's position.

Enough has now been said to indicate the scope of this valuable and important contribution to early English history, and it only remains to express once more the profound regret which all who read it must feel that the pen which wrote it has been for ever laid down, and that never again will the folk of Hampshire be able to learn the story of the ancient glories of their shire and their country from the lips of their beloved friend and revered master.

F. J. C. H.

Records of Romsey Abbey: An account of the Benedictine House of Nuns, with notes on the Parish Church and Town (A.D., 907—1558), by Henry G. D. Liveing, M.A., Vicar of Hyde, Winchester. Winchester: Warrren and Son, 1906.

It is exceedingly appropriate that just on the eve of the celebration of the one thousandth anniversary of the founding of Romsey Abbey, and immediateiy before the summer during whose course the people of Romsey will commemorate by means of a pageant the varied history of their town, this interesting and valuable work should appear. It is the product of many years of loving labour and scholarly research, and its author deserves the gratitude of all students both of Hampshire antiquities and of mediæval ecclesiastical institutions. Mr. Liveing has managed to get together a good deal of new and detailed information concerning both the abbey and its inmates, from a careful examination of all available references in printed records on the one hand, and from a diligent collection of British Museum and diocesan manuscripts on the other hand. Only those who have attempted an exhaustive investigation of this kind can estimate how much time and thought (to say nothing of expense) it involves.

At the very outset Mr. Liveing is able to throw a flood of light on no less important a person than the patron-saint of the Abbey, S. Æthelflæda. It has been commonly assumed[1] that the saint in question was the daughter of the founder of the abbey, King Edward the Elder. But Mr. Liveing has shown conclusively that, though the King's daughter was certainly an inmate, and was probably the first abbess, yet not she, but a later Æthelflæda, abbess about the year A.D. 1003, was the saint whose name was linked with that of S. Mary in the dedication of the Abbey. He gives in full a modernised rendering of a curious "Account of Saint Alfleda," contained in a manuscript formerly belonging to Romsey Abbey, now in the British Museum.[1] It appears that S. Æthelfleda was the daughter of a powerful West-Saxon thegn named Athelwold, a close confidant of King Edgar; and it would seem probable

[1] Cf. "Handbook to Romsey Abbey," 1902, and "Victoria County History of Hampshire," Vol. II., p. 126.

that her mother was that Elfrida who afterwards, as a widow, became King Edgar's Queen. The enumeration of Æthelflæda's saintly deeds is edifying; these deeds, include for example, the giving away to the poor of large sums of other people's money entrusted to the keeping of the pious abbess!

Mr. Liveing has not yet succeeded in clearing up the mystery of the conventual buildings at Romsey, and he has not attempted to give a plan of them—this must be regarded as one of the most serious omissions in the book. But he has made from his careful investigations suggestions which will go far towards the complete reconstruction of the plan when the time comes for a more thorough excavation of the site than has as yet been possible.

A comparison of Mr. Liveing's list of abbesses (pp. xviii.—xxiii.) with that given in the "Victoria County History" (vol. II., p. 132), shows how many and how important are the names which have been by Mr. Liveing rescued from oblivion; and a comparison of the dates assigned to the names common to the two lists show in how many particulars he has been able to correct long current errors. It would be out of place to enter into details in this review; but it may be mentioned that while the "Victoria County History" enumerates but twenty-seven abbesses, Mr. Liveing gives no less than thirty-three. Moreover, concerning nearly all he has been able to gather information hitherto not generally known.

Not only, however, in this volume are forgotten names brought back to memory; historic events also are recovered from uncertainty, and made real and living once again. Notable among these is the terrible visitation of the Black Death in the middle of the fourteenth century. So vivid is the description of the havoc wrought at Romsey by the awful pestilence; so poignant is the sense of national woe engendered by the letter of the good Bishop, William de Edyndon, that at this point the "Records of Romsey" rise to the height of a commentary upon the History of England. The Abbey of Romsey never recovered from the calamity which then befell it; before the plague it had had nearly one hundred inmates, but in 1478 their number is found reduced to eighteen, and they never rose above twenty-five till their final suppression."

[1] Lansdowne MSS., No. 435, ff. 436—456.

Mr. Liveing's account of the dissolution of the convent in Henry VIII.'s reign disposes of the pleasing illusion of the writer of the "Handbook to Romsey Abbey" that "no charge whatever was alleged against the nuns of Romsey." In 1478 Abbess Elizabeth Broke was degraded on her own confession of perjury and adultery; in 1507 Abbess Joyce Rows was charged by Master John Dowman, Vicar-General of the Bishop of Winchester, with "drinking and eating to enormous excess, especially at night," while the account of a visitation of Bishop Fox in 1527, "reveals," says Mr. Liveing, "a lamentable state of things in the case of several of the sisters, and closes with the saddest event that stains the pages of the Abbey's history. Alice Corsyn was punished for using "reproachful and defamatory words" concerning her sister nuns; Margaret Dowman confessed to misconduct with one Thomas Hordes, and the Sub-Prioress Clemence Malyn was proved to have entertained Richard Johans in the church, and was convicted of perjury in the matter. It is evident that the convent at Romsey, so far from being stainless, furnished one of those "horrid examples" of corruption so eagerly sought for by Henry and his ministers.

In closing this imperfect account of an admirable and opportune piece of historical research, may I be allowed one word of complaint? The references to the authorities, instead of being given *passim*, are grouped together vague and indefinite at the end of each chapter. It is rarely possible to fix the source of any particular statement. It would have been immeasurably better to give a full list of authorities at the beginning of the volume, and then to have made reference to this list by means of foot notes at the bottom of each page. The appearance of the book—and it is highly artistic—might have been somewhat marred, but its usefulness to scholars would have been greatly enhanced. I note, too, that Mr. Liveing seems to have overlooked the fact that the roll of the proceedings of the "Abbess of Romsey's Courts of the Hundred of Whorwelsdown and the Manor of Ashton" is transcribed fully in Professor Maitland's "Select Pleas in Manorial Courts." Bracton's Note Book (pl. 775, 1110), moreover, supplies further information concerning the Abbess's jurisdiction.

F. J. C. H.

GENERAL INDEX TO VOL. V.

PAPERS AND PROCEEDINGS

OF THE

Hampshire Field Club

AND

Archaeological Society,

ESTABLISHED 1885,

For the Study of the Natural History and Antiquities of the County.

VOL. V. 1904-6.

EDITED BY

THE REV. G. W. MINNS, LL.B., F.S.A.

AND

F. J. C. HEARNSHAW, M.A, LL.M.

SOUTHAMPTON:

H. M. GILBERT & SON, 21, ABOVE BAR, AND AT WINCHESTER.

PRINTED AT THE "HAMPSHIRE INDEPENDENT" AND "SOUTHERN DAILY ECHO" OFFICE.

1905.

PREFACE.

The editors have pleasure in presenting to members of the *Hampshire Field Club and Archæological Society* the fifth volume of Papers and Proceedings, and in doing so they wish to tender their hearty thanks to the numerous contributors who have responded to their appeals for articles so generously as to make it possible for them to issue one Part of the Proceedings with some approach to punctuality each year. They hope that in the future the supply of contributions will not fail, and they venture to make the request that papers may be sent to them as early as possible in the year, so that they may be able to establish the custom of publishing the Annual Part with regularity each autumn.

There is much of scientific and archæological interest in Hampshire yet remaining to be investigated and written upon. The editors suggest that a systematic survey of the county should be made by members of the Field Club in order that a list may be drawn up enumerating the matters which most urgently press for research or exposition.

They will be delighted to receive offers of papers from members of the Society, and will gladly welcome any suggestions which may lead to the securing of contributions for future issues of the Proceedings.

G. W. Minns.
F. J. C. Hearnshaw.